

MAGIC GLASS.

A Curious Mirror That May Be Made Transparent.

One of the most curious inventions of this age is what is called platituzed glass. A piece of glass is coated with an exceedingly thin layer of a liquid charged with platinum and then raised to a red heat. The platinum becomes united to the glass in such a way as to form an odd kind of mirror.

The glass has not really lost its transparency, and yet if one places it against a wall and looks at it he sees his image as in an ordinary looking glass. But when light is allowed to come through the glass from the other side, as when it is placed in a window, it appears perfectly transparent, like ordinary glass.

By constructing a window of platituzed glass one could stand close behind the panes in an unilluminated room and behold clearly everything going on outside, while passersby looking at the window would behold only a fine mirror or set of mirrors in which their own figures would be reflected, while the person inside remained invisible.

In France various tricks have been contrived with the aid of this glass. In one a person, seeing what appears to be an ordinary mirror, approaches it to gaze upon himself. A sudden change in the mechanism sends light through the glass from the back, whereupon it instantly becomes transparent, and the startled spectator finds himself confronted by some grotesque figure that had been hidden behind the magic glass.—New York Tribune.

SPEED LAWS OF 1816.

Coaches Going Nine Miles an Hour Frightened the English.

The outcry daily growing louder in England against the excessive speed of motor cars lends interest to the following passage from the Annual Register for 1816:

A new coach was started in the spring to run to Brighton, a distance of fifty-two miles, in six hours. * * * This, however, became alarming, particularly in the populous neighborhood of Newington, through which it passed, and the parish officers there caused information to be laid against the drivers for driving furiously on the public road so as to endanger the lives of his majesty's subjects.

The result of this is to be read in Mansard's "Parliamentary Reports," June 10, 1816.

The attorney general moved for leave to bring in a bill the object of which was the protection of the lives and limbs of his majesty's subjects by correcting the enormous abuses of stagecoach drivers. Within these few days it would be hardly credible what a number of applications he had received on this subject.

Some accounts were enough to freeze one with horror. A gentleman of veracity had informed him that on Tuesday, May 21, at 5:30, the Trafalgar and Regulator coaches set off from Manchester and got to Liverpool at 8:20, doing this journey in two hours fifty minutes, at the rate of twelve miles an hour.—New York Sun.

Fiji Islanders' Sugar Cane Dance.

A very curious and exceedingly clever dance may be witnessed in Fiji called by the natives "the sugar cane meke," or sugar cane dance. It represents the growth of the sugar cane. In the first figure the dancers squat low on the ground, shake their heads, shut their eyes and murmur slowly and softly an unintelligible sentence. Gradually they all stand up together, growing taller and taller, and as they "grow" they wave their arms and tremble all over from ankle to head, like the tall, tasseled cane waving in the wind, and still they keep on chanting louder and louder. The last figure represents a series of combats meant to symbolize the exactions of the chiefs, who compel the "kasi," willing and unwilling, to come and cut their crops.—London Standard.

Ambulance Field Examination.

Scene—Hamilton South Haugh; soldier supposed to have been wounded is brought to surgeon's tent by bearers. Bearer (reporting)—Severe scalp wound, sir, accompanied with insensibility. Surgeon—Well, what have you done? Bearer—Dressed the wound, sir, and gave him a little whisky and water. Surgeon—Whisky and water! How did you expect an insensible man to swallow that? Bearer—He ax, a fort, sir.—London Illustrated Bits.

Tricks of the Trade.

Buyers of patent leather should look out for skins in which holes have been neatly covered with a piece of thin paper which is varnished over, the unfinished side being puttied up with a mixture of glue and leather dust.—Shoe Manufacturers' Monthly.

Genius.

As diamond cuts diamond and one bone smooths a second, all parts of intellect are whetstones to each other, and genius, which is but the result of their mutual sharpening, is character too.—Alfred Tennyson.

Nor "The Long Green."

Hicks—They say that the blind can distinguish colors by the sense of touch. Wicks—That's nothing. One doesn't have to be blind to feel blue.—Boston Transcript.

A Comparison.

In a certain store there is a salesman named Green. Small Clarence learned his name and said, "Say, Mr. Green, there's a man living two doors from us who has a name the same color as yours!"

sound). Out of this dilemma the way is easy.

If the federal government was to issue as needed \$400,000,000 of 2 per cent thirty to fifty year bonds to aid in road building it would carry the national debt up from \$11.11 to \$15.55 and the interest charge from 29 to 39 cents per capita. The debt per capita then would be almost exactly where it was ten years ago.

It would require \$8,000,000 a year to pay the interest on the bonds, but every dollar of it would be saved upon the one item of rural delivery.

Of the 2,100,000 miles of highways about 900,000 miles are post roads, and about 800,000 of these are unimproved. The \$400,000,000 for national aid would give about \$500 a mile, or about 25 per cent of the average cost of building hard roads upon these highways.

After ten years of study of road building at home and abroad the writer has reached the following definite conclusions:

First.—That if we are to have good roads within a generation the federal government must assist in building them.

Second.—That the government contribution be pro rated among the states as the work is done on the basis of one-half the gross sum upon the full road mileage of the state and one-half upon the basis of population. The plan works out fairly to all the states. This plan would make available out of \$400,000,000 approximately \$25,000,000 for New York, \$25,000,000 for Pennsylvania, \$25,000,000 for Illinois, \$15,000,000 for Ohio, \$15,000,000 for Michigan, etc.

Third.—That the actual construction of the roads should be done under state supervision upon specifications approved by the United States government engineers.

Fourth.—That the initiative should be left with the respective townships, road districts or parishes, these to furnish at least one-third of the total cost, with the state clothed with power to veto any improvement if of insufficient importance. This power would probably be seldom if ever used. It may be assumed if the road was not a main highway and needed the people of a township would not vote to build it when they had to raise at least one-third of the money required to do so.

Fifth.—That if this country is to fulfill its high destiny and meet the requirements placed upon it by its wealth, position and its opportunity good roads are a paramount necessity, and to get them speedily requires both federal and state aid to hearten the people to undertake this great work. Good roads will do more for the educational, social and economic development of the whole country than any other single agency.

GOOD ROADS IN ENGLAND.

W. H. Moore Says the United States Should Follow British Example.

W. H. Moore, president of the National Good Roads association, writing to the editor of the Kansas City Star, says:

The finest examples of perfect, easy and durable roads I have found in the British Isles are the Warwick road from Leamington to Warwick castle, about two and a half miles; the Kenilworth road from Leamington to Kenilworth castle, five miles, and the Stratford road from Leamington to Stratford-on-Avon, ten and a half miles. These roads are about four rods wide between fences. The traveled or improved portion is twenty-two feet wide between grass edges.

All these roads have horse paths on one side. Some of these are carefully prepared with stone averaging from two to three feet deep, the top surfacing being earth. The paths on the side, which are two or three feet from the main road, average about five feet in width. No material has ever been nor ever will be found more suitable to horses' feet and to the horsemen than the common earth surfaced roads. The roads referred to receive careful and constant attention.

In the early season, May or June, they receive an application of coal tar product. This is impervious to rain and allays the dust. The very best interests of the people of the British Isles socially and commercially are conserved by the splendid system of public roads. If the great army of politicians in the United States who are making pyrotechnic speeches and all candidates for municipal, state and federal offices should confine their campaign to the subject of good roads and when elected go after the question in earnest, they would soon accomplish the greatest good in their generation. Every county can afford good roads.

With a little common sense financing by bonding or making a special levy with an interest and a sinking fund consideration any community can possess good roads, with all their attendant blessings. The curse of mud roads in the United States is a national, monumental fraud. It is a hideous evidence of misgovernment, a reproach against the advancement of equal rights and liberty to all.

Combine For Good Roads.

Minneapolis (Minn.) teamsters and motorists have joined forces in an effort to secure better roads, the Minneapolis Teamsters' union and the Minneapolis Automobile club having decided to go into politics to secure good highways. The plan is to work and vote only for aldermanic candidates who will pledge their aid to the good roads cause. Theodore Wirth, superintendent of the Minneapolis parks, has been elected the first honorary member of the Automobile club, and he is expected to help the movement.

Roads and the R. F. D.

Notice is being sent out from the postoffice department to many rural communities that unless roads are repaired and placed in condition for uninterrupted service during the year the rural service will be discontinued. This is work for good roads that will doubtless have a wide and wholesome effect, says the *Achison Globe*. The rural mail service has become so much a part of the farmer's life as to be regarded as a necessity, and he isn't likely to let it lapse for the sake of a little time and energy needed in road building.

QUESTION HARD TO ANSWER

Interrogation of Little Son Was Embarrassing to His Over-Confident Mother.

Gustave Eberlein, the famous German sculptor, said the other day in New York that in beauty of face and figure the American woman excelled all others—that the American type of beauty approached almost absolute perfection.

"In intelligence as well," the sculptor resumed, "the American woman excels. But now and then she has the defect of the intelligent—she is overpositive, she is overconfident. In that case I like to see her taken down."

"I once met a beautiful and brilliant American woman on shipboard. She talked splendidly, but she was very positive—positive, indeed."

"I am a good reader of faces," she said one day at luncheon. "On first sight of a person I form my opinion of that person's character; and I am never wrong. I am positively never wrong."

"Mother," her little boy called shrilly from the other end of the long table, where he sat with his nurse.

"Well, what is it, my son?" said the mother, indulgently.

"And we all turned to hear what the little fellow had to say."

"Mother," he piped, "I want to know what was your opinion, mother, when you first saw me?"

"MAY I USE YOUR TELEPHONE?"

We have received the following sample of Canadian telephone humor. The telephone borrowing nuisance, unfair alike to the subscriber and the company, does not seem to have attained similar proportions here:

"This telephone is yours; we only pay the rent for it. It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"Please scribble on the walls as they need decorating."

"Long-distance calls our specialty; kindly do not offer to settle."

"Our family are prohibited from using the phone except between six and seven a. m. Sundays."—London National Telephone Journal.

MODERNITY'S TRIUMPH.

Papa was about to apply the strap.

"Father," said Willie, firmly, "unless that instrument has been properly sterilized I desire to protest."

This gave the old man pause.

"Moreover," continued Willie, "the germs that might be released by the violent impact of leather upon a porous textile fabric but lately exposed to the dust of the streets would be apt to affect you deleteriously."

As the strap fell from a nerveless hand, Willie sloped.

RATHER FIERY.

Old Uncle Hiram from down Bacon Ridge way halted in front of the "quick lunch room."

"Waal, begosh," he drawled in deep meditation, "I always heard that thar was a blamed lot of fire eaters up in town, but I didn't know they would go that far."

"What, now, Uncle Hiram?" asked the city nephew.

"Why, just look at that sign, 'Lightning Lunches.' Just think of lunching on lightning!"

MARRIED CHUMS.

"Has he any friends?" asked the judge of a prisoner in the dock.

"No, only a wife," was the matter-of-fact reply of the witness. Rather hard on the wife not to be counted as her husband's friend, wasn't it?

It is the perfection of marriage when a couple are real chums as well as lovers, just as it is the perfection of parenthood when children count mother and father their real, best friends.

FULLY EXPLAINED.

"Yes, her husband is always confidential with her. He isn't like so many men who never tell their wives anything."

"Do you mean Porgie?"

"Yes."

"His wife doesn't get much out of Porgie. He can tell her all he knows in five minutes."

A SORE SUBJECT.

"How much did that capitol cost?" inquired the sightseer in Harrisburg.

"Sir," replied the guide, severely, "we are here to improve our minds; not to talk scandal."

DOOM OF AN EYESORE

How Kansas Women Transformed Town's Ugliest Block.

PUBLIC LIBRARY THEIR AIM.

Through Efforts of Abilene's Clubwomen an Unsightly Spot Was Condemned For Park Purposes—Carnegie Library Erected In Its Center.

After nine years of effort, sacrifice and planning the women of Abilene, Kan., recently saw a fruition of their hopes in the dedication of a public library costing \$12,500, equipped with 6,000 books and set in the midst of a pretty city park in the most central block of town.

This is a striking example of what can be done in the average country community when the right persons have the right inspiration and endeavor to do some good to those around them. Ten years ago the people of Abilene laughed at the idea of a successful public library. Several attempts had been made to establish such, and each was a failure. The books gradually had been lost, and finally the rooms were given up.

The clubwomen took up the idea, appointing a committee composed of members from each of the clubs, and made another effort, says the *Kansas City Star*. It was a slow and tedious process at first. The first books were gifts from individuals, making a very meager collection of indifferent literature. The first money in any amount that was secured for the library was from a lecture by William Jennings Bryan soon after the election of 1900. The proceeds were divided between the library and other local enterprises, and \$100 was realized. Then came the first rummage sale, something the town never had experienced and which created much hilarity when it opened.

But in those days old clothes were much more in demand than in these times, and the proceeds surprised even the managers. After this the library fund grew steadily from all sorts of entertainments, donations and schemes that would add to its proportions. A small room was secured over a grocery store, and the first books were installed with a librarian who practically gave her services.

This librarian was Miss Lida Romig, a graduate of the University of Kansas and with experience in the large book concerns of Chicago and Boston. She entered into the work of the struggling library with all the enthusiasm of the clubwomen's committee and gave it the same earnest and careful attention that might characterize the largest city institution.

After awhile the town voted a library tax. This amounts to about \$1,200 a year, which speedily put the library on its feet. It had become by this time an established institution. The application for books far exceeded the equipment, and the little room became too small for the growing number of volumes. Next the women sought a library building, but they had no place to put it nor money with which to buy a site. Finally they evolved a way out of the difficulty and included in their plans the wiping out of what had become the town's eyesore, the ugliest block in Abilene.

This block was in the center of the town, but on low ground which had often been overflowed at flood time. On one corner was the badly located city hall, built in the boom days and used for the marshal's residence and the fire department. An unsightly livery barn, an old house, a great sheet iron shed for implements, four or five rickety store buildings used for blacksmith shops and second hand stores and three or four lots covered with discarded traction engines, thrashing machines and rubbish of every sort completed the disfigurement of the square. It was laughed at, scorned and abused by everybody and considered a disgrace to the city. Visitors never were taken past that block if it was possible to avoid it.

The clubwomen undertook to transform this unsightly spot into one of beauty. The mayor assisted them by calling a special election to issue park bonds, and by the work of the women these bonds were voted by a small majority. Then the entire block was condemned for park purposes, and all the buildings and disfigurements on it were removed, leaving the city hall as its only occupant. Then by request of the women the city made formal application to Andrew Carnegie for \$12,500 for a public library, accompanying the request by the assurance that the park block would be used for a site. The library tax already in force, together with the income from other methods of money raising, insured a sufficient income to meet the requirements of the Carnegie gift. The city hauled in dirt from the higher portions of the town and filled up the block far above the high water mark, and in the center has been placed the new public library. It is all stone and brick, with cement basement and foundations, and is one of the handsomest buildings of its class in the state. The furniture is all oak and in the simplest lines and most artistic form. A handsomely furnished assembly room is open to the clubwomen for their meetings.

When the new building was opened the people thronged the rooms and were effusive in their praise of the accomplishments that the women of the town had brought about.

The pretty park block has been planted in elms and sown to blue grass and will be one of the beauty spots of Abilene. Every visitor now is taken by the public library and the town park.

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P. S.—We furnish ice in winter as well as summer.

ZEPPELIN CARRIES
WOMEN IN HIS AIRSHIP.

FRIEDRICHSHAFEN, Nov. 4.—Count Zeppelin made a successful trip in his new airship Sunday around the Lake of Constance. He was accompanied by several women, including Dutchess Vera of Wurtemberg, and his own daughter. The airship was aloft for one hour.

STATEHOUSE SQUARE
IS DESERTED.

FRANKFORT, Ky., Nov. 4.—The Statehouse square was practically deserted today, all of the officials having gone home to vote. Insurance Commissioner C. W. Bell, who has purchased a home in this county, is the only official here.